

Draft Minute of Biggar Community Council Zoom Meeting on 18th January 2021

Present:- Lesley Craise (LC) – Chairperson, Thelma Ingram (TI) – Secretary, Janet Moxley (JM) – Treasurer, Jimmy Ritchie (JR), Laura Shirley (LS), Peter Rae (PR), Neil Ingram (NI) - Associate Member, Al Stewart, Associate Member.
Ex- officio Members – Cllr Ian McAllan (Cllr IMcA) and Cllr Alex Allison (Cllr AA).

6 members of the public also attended.

1. Welcome.

2. **Apologies** –, Cllr Eric Holford, Aileen Campbell MSP, Caz Alcorn.
3. Declaration of A.O.C.B.
4. Adoption of last meeting's minutes. Proposed Janet, seconded Jimmy.
5. Matters Arising from minutes –

Resilience Plan – Neil explained that gritting by SLC, BCAG and residents during the recent snowfall had been successful, though there had been delays with filling grit bins over New Year. A problem with gritting at South Croft Way had been referred to SLC. This is the main route to the Health Centre, which can alternatively be accessed through the Kello Hospital grounds.

Requests for grit bins in Knockside and other areas served by paths alone have been turned down. It was agreed that SLC's policy on gritting paths and pavements and roads without pavements e.g. North Back Road and the shared space at Pentland Reach, needs to be revised.

SLC have turned down requests from Bob Brownlie and Neil for gritting of the path from Clydesdale Close to the Co-op, so further requests will be made. BCAG have been clearing and gritting from the end of the archway at Clydesdale Close to the Co-op.

A list of emergency contacts for utilities etc will be placed on the BCC website.

Meeting with neighbouring Community Councils – Janet has had some suggested dates from Duneaton CC which she will offer to Quothquan and Thankerton CC and Symington CC.

Offer of Land from Story Homes - Lesley has been approached by Story Homes in relation to a parcel of land at Pentland Reach which was originally intended to be allotments. We have been asked if we would like to take over this land at zero cost for community use.

We have clarified that Community Councils can own land, but if a CC ceases to exist, any such land would revert to SLC.

After some discussion it was agreed that Lesley would write to Story Homes saying that we are considering what to do, asking whether they would pay the costs of transfer and asking for clarification of whether

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the residents of Phase 2 had been expecting to take on ownership of this land. Lesley will also circulate a location plan and photograph of the land.

6. **Police Report** – Janet read out the following written report received from PC Cameron Paton.

"As mentioned in my last update, I can't go into specific detail in relation to Crimes for GDPR reasons but I can give you a brief rundown of recent crimes/incidents that have been reported since your last meeting.

In relation to partial registrations, yes absolutely worthwhile. In relation to rural crime or any crime for that matter, obtaining a registration mark when a vehicle is involved whether full or partial can be the difference between solving a crime or not.

Crime/Incident Report - Between 10/12/20-16/01/21 for the Biggar area

There have been a total of 13 crimes reported, 5 of which are currently detected (where someone has been charged). Some enquiries are still ongoing. None of the reported crimes are what are classified as 'Serious Crime' - Serious Assault, Attempted Murder, Murder etc.

Of note, there were two Housebreakings during this period, one in Biggar and one in Thankerton. The Biggar enquiry is still ongoing and a dedicated team are carrying out extensive enquiries to trace those responsible.

There has been a sexual offence and an assault reported but the most commonly reported offences are crimes of dishonesty and road traffic matters, such as motorists failing to stop after colliding with other vehicles or property. Bear in mind when considering sexual offences and assaults, these are often reported to have happened within households by people known to one another.

Although there are some concerning individual incidents, there are currently no particular crime trends in the area causing significant concern. However, as mentioned last time, we are always alert due to the nature of Biggar and the wider area, there is the opportunity for rural thefts to become prevalent again and we monitor incidents and crimes regularly to establish if there are any particular trends.

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If you have any other concerns for the area, please let me know and I am happy to discuss further by email or over the phone."

7. **Matters raised by members of public** Thanks were expressed to Bob Brownlie who had cleared paths and steps for residents in Boghall, and to BCAG for its achievements for other Biggar residents.
8. **Community Action Plan.** Lesley has a list of 82 local organisations to contact, 29 of which have no email addresses. Members agreed to try to find contact details for the remaining organisations. It was also agreed that organisations could nominate people from outwith Biggar who had a significant involvement in the town.
9. **CCTV** – Lesley introduced the report written by Janet on the survey of residents and businesses carried out at the end of 2020. She thanked Bob Brownlie and Peter Rae for the work they had put into the project. She commented that the outcome shows that the people surveyed are ambivalent towards the proposals, and while a majority were broadly in favour, many others who commented had reservations. The key questions are is there a problem and is this a proportionate response? It was concluded that incidents were at a low level and CCTV installation would not be a proportionate response. It was decided that we should not proceed with the installation of CCTV in the High Street.
10. **Bonfire Update** – Al Stewart confirmed that he had been in contact with SLC concerning the licensing of the bonfire in 2021. A survey of the area outside the Corn Exchange will be carried out to check what pipework is there. A meeting with SLC has been arranged. In the past the Community Council has been involved through the insurance of the event. SLC Councillors agreed to check what view SLC would take about future insurance for the bonfire event.
Al Stewart agreed to share with BCC councillors the most recent letter from the advisory body of which SLC is a member.
11. **SLC Councillors' Reports**
Cllr AA – the main issue has been bin collections which have been delayed by the weather since New Year. There has been a problem in places with bagged black bin waste not being picked up.
The budget exercise is being taken forward with proposals from officers, but there was no indication yet of the level of Scottish Government's funding or of increases to Council Tax.
Cllr IMcA – Budget proposals are being looked at by a cross-party group prior to a full Council meeting on 24 February. Comments from the community are welcomed before then.

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Problems with refuse collection at Westercrofts have been addressed by using a smaller vehicle.

Pettinain Bridge – work should go ahead later this year once the required areas of land have been acquired.

The Municipal Hall will be returned to use for vaccinations in February and therefore will not be available for general public use for some months.

Speeding on Lindsaylands Road – still with Traffic Division of Police Scotland.

12.BCC Councillors Reports – Peter asked when the Corn Exchange clock would be fixed. The Corn Exchange Trust will be contacted about this. Jimmy reported that roadworks would be carried out later this month at Burnbraes, the Cross Keys carpark and the Station Road junction with Market Road and the A702. All these are dependent on weather conditions.

13.Treasurer's report

Banking arrangements Due to the ongoing COVID situation, Bank of Scotland are continuing not to accept new applications for their Treasurer's account which has dual authorisation online banking, however dual signature cheque banking continues to work well.

Business Account Final balance £347.08.

No expenditure from this account since last meeting.

Clyde Windfarm Account Final balance £3465.02.

£500 paid to BCAG for gritting device.

Incentive Account. Final balance £4702.63. There are four funds within this account:

1. Glenkerie Windfarm Microgrant Fund. Final balance £143.92.

£100 paid to BCAG for gritting device and £250 to Biggar and District Community Heritage for their Town Trail leaflet.

2. BCC Incentive Fund. Final balance £758.44.

No expenditure from this fund since last meeting.

3. Clyde Extension COVID fund. Final balance £2300.27.

No expenditure from this fund since last meeting.

4. Glenkerie COVID fund. Final balance £1500.

No expenditure from this fund since last meeting.

Please encourage community groups to apply for microgrants either from COVID or standard funds as appropriate.

Asset register No change since last meeting.

14.Grant Applications/ Administration of Grants

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No applications have been approved since the last BCC meeting. One application is in progress and another has been referred to the main Clyde fund at SLC.

15. Secretary's report

Thelma further thanked everyone who has helped her undertake the role of secretary. Her eyesight continues to cause problems and will only get worse. She is finding it very difficult to deal with many aspects of CC work.

She confirmed that she would be standing down as Secretary by the next meeting and wishes to cease to be a Community Councillor if it does not cause problems for BCC. SLC will be consulted on the constitutional restrictions on appointing new members.

16. Planning Report – there are outline proposals for a nursing home at Kersewells near Carnwath. Thelma also asked that SLC should consider improving access to their website.

17. A.O.C.B.- Biggar and District Community Heritage Trust have asked to come to talk to the CC about a possible off-road cycle path from Biggar to Symington. This could be included in the February meeting.

Gordon Cunningham has expressed an interest in re-joining the CC.

Lesley will write to SLC to see if we can co-opt him as a full member.

18. Date of next meeting – 15 February 2021. The postponed AGM will probably be held in March 2021.

Minute prepared by Thelma Ingram.